

March 13, 2012
Labor Committee
In Support of SB No. 352

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski, and members of the Labor Committee:

I am writing in support of collective bargaining rights for family daycare providers.

My name is Adelaida Garcia and I live and work as a daycare provider in Waterbury. I run Sunshine Academy, a licensed daycare in my home. Besides raising seven children, I've provided expert care as a provider for twenty years. I have my Child Development Associate credential and I am bilingual in Spanish and English.

My facility is open from 6:30 in the morning until 6:30 in the evening. I work very hard to give the best service to the children and the parents in my community. My youngest charge is one and a half years old. My toddlers get potty-trained in my home and for the preschoolers in my care I teach from the Children's Preschool Education Program curriculum. The school age kids get a fresh, natural breakfast before they are seen safely off to school and when they come back after school they get another nutritious, natural meal.

I love children but it can be very hard work and it is not valued as it should be. For the service and resources that I provide you would think I would get more compensation than I do. Even for full-time infant's care I receive only \$583 a month. In fact, overall, my pay has gone down. I haven't been receiving pay for many hours of care I give before and after school and when school is out. It is getting so difficult to pay the mortgage and other bills of maintaining a daycare that I am thinking of getting out of daycare. I know many other providers in Waterbury who are also struggling to keep their doors open.

To improve the availability of quality care in Waterbury I helped establish an association